

SURGICAL CARE. By Ronald W. Raven, O.B.E.(Mil.), F.R.C.S. Second edition. (Pp. xii + 422; figs. 68. 37s. 6d.). London: Butterworth. 1952.

This is described as "a handbook of pre-operative and post-operative treatment." House-surgeons and registrars will find it a useful companion in the wards and in working for the F.R.C.S. About one quarter of the book is devoted to the general principles of metabolism in relation to surgery, thrombo-embolism, wound healing and so on. Clear directions are given for blood and fluid administration, oxygen therapy, anti-coagulant treatment, the care of wounds and other such practical procedures. The rest of the book is devoted to regional surgery and reasoned discussion is combined with detailed advice about the management of most of the common surgical operations. There is a classified bibliography.

The advice given throughout is orthodox and sound, but there are several ways in which the book could be improved. A chapter on chemotherapy and the antibiotics in surgery is much needed, and a general account of such topics as ambulation after operation, breathing exercises, analgesia and sedation, and vitamins would save repetition and vagueness in the chapters on regional surgery. It is surprising to find no account of post-operative atelectasis, plasma substitutes, the care of gangrene, and the management of the diabetic undergoing surgery. It is difficult for anyone but the expert to keep abreast of recent developments in metabolism, but some account of the relation of the suprarenal cortical hormones to nitrogen, fluid and electrolyte balance following trauma would help to clarify these subjects.

R. B. W.

TEXT-BOOK OF MEDICAL TREATMENT. Edited by D. M. Dunlop, B.A.(Oxon.), M.D., F.R.C.P.(Ed.), F.R.C.P.(Lond.); L. S. P. Davidson, B.A.(Camb.), M.D., F.R.C.P.(Ed.), F.R.C.P.(Lond.), M.D.(Oslo), and Sir John McNee, D.S.O., M.D., D.Sc.(Glas.), F.R.C.P.(Ed.), F.R.C.P.(Lond.), F.R.F.P.S. Sixth edition. (Pp. xvi + 1023; fig. 44. 50s.). Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone. 1953.

This is the 6th edition, and the 11th printing of this book since it first appeared in 1939, a fact which reflects its enormous success. The twenty-eight contributors are all on the staffs of Scottish hospitals, most of them of Glasgow or Edinburgh; and represent current Scottish medical thought and teaching. It sometimes happens that books by several contributors are unequal in the quality of the contributions. This is not the case here, as the various chapters are well balanced and presented with a certain uniformity. Among the completely new chapters are those on chemotherapy, rehabilitation, the treatment of poisoning, and the chemotherapy of malignant disease. One new feature is the use of the metric system for drugs; in the case of the older galenicals the approximate figure in the older system is given in brackets.

This is one of the most useful, informative and interesting books in present-day medicine. It illustrates the modern importance of the treatment of the patient and of his disease, and contrasts with the standard text-books of forty years ago, where all the stress was on diagnosis, and treatment was often omitted or dismissed in a few lines. One finds it difficult either to select for special praise any of the 28 sections, or indeed to find anything to criticise in so excellent a volume.

R. M.

AIDS TO THEATRE TECHNIQUE. By Marjorie Houghton, M.B.E., S.R.N., S.C.M., D.N.(Lond.). Second edition. (Pp. xvi + 260; figs. 125. 5s.). London: Ballière, Tindall & Cox. 1952.

This is a good account of operating theatre technique for nurses. It is a text-book rather than an "aid" and is profusely illustrated. It will be particularly valuable to theatre staff nurses, who will wish to possess it, but probationers will find it useful for reference.

The distinctive colours which are described for anæsthetic cylinders are now out of date.

R. B. W.